Important Reminders About ELL Program Selection and Placement

- An ELL must be placed in a Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE), Dual Language, or Freestanding English as a Second Language (ESL) program within ten days of enrollment.
- Studies show that students who remain in one program consistently attain English proficiency more quickly and perform better academically than students who switch from one program to another.
- If the TBE program that you select is not available in your child's school in that district where a TBE program is available. All ELLs must receive at least an ESL program.
- If you do not complete a Parent Survey and Program Selection Form, the school will automatically place your child in a TBE program if it is available. Otherwise they will be placed in an ESL program.
- Once your child scores above a state designated level of proficiency on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT), he or she may enter an all-English instructional program. Your child can continue to receive bilingual or ESL support.
- You will be notified of your child's continued entitlement to support services based on your child's level of English proficiency (as determined by his or her score on the NYSESLAT) before the beginning of each new school year.
- Services for ELLs who also receive Special Education services are provided in accordance with students' Individual Education Programs (IEP).

You can participate in your child's education in the following ways:

- Ensure that your child comes to school every day, ready to learn.
- Ensure that your child reads, works on academic subjects, and completes his or her homework assignments daily.
- Attend school activities such as classroom trips, assemblies, and Parent Teacher Association (PTA)/ Parent Association (PA) meetings.
- Attend all parent-teacher conferences.
- Attend parent workshops and conferences that are specially designed to assist you in helping your child.
- Help your child obtain a public library card and visit the library frequently.
- Serve as a parent volunteer in your child's school.
- Create a supportive home environment for learning and studying.
- Read with your child in your native language every day and encourage him or her to read 30 minutes daily.

For additional information you can:

- Speak with your child's teacher, principal, or parent coordinator.
- Call 311 to find the address of your local regional or district office and visit.
- Call the Office of ELLs at (212) 374-6072.
- Visit the Department of Education Web site: whttp://schools.nyc.goc/academics/ELL.

NYC Department of Education
Dennis M. Walcott, Chancellor

NYC Department of Education

Guide for Parents *of* English Language Learners

Office of English Language Learners

Our Mission:

The Office of English Language Learners (ELLs) provides ELLs and their families with equity and access to an excellent education by strengthening instructional staff, promoting parental involvement and improving material resources.

The Office strives to create a rigorous learning environment that focuses on academic achievement, language and social development, and cross-cultural support.

Dear Parent or Guardian:

The Office of English Language Learners in the New York City Department of Education wants your child to succeed academically. That is why we are excited to share with you the programs available to those newly enrolled students who have native languages other than English and may need support in reaching English proficiency in our schools. We call these students English Language Learners, or ELLs.

Programs for ELLs in New York City do more than just accelerate English language development. With more than 143,000 current ELLs in our schools representing 160 different languages, our programs reach beyond language learning to help students maximize their diverse talents and skills in native language literacy and academic subjects, like science and math. For ELLs to excel academically in our schools, they must meet the same rigorous state and city educational standards for their grade level as English proficient students. This requires more than just English language support.

In New York City, we provide bilingual programs (Transitional Bilingual Education and Dual Language) that strengthen students' native language development and subject matter mastery while they transition to English. We also provide English as a Second Language (ESL) programs that use strategies to help students access new language development and subject matter through English. All programs provide students with ESL support tailored to their English proficiency level.

As a parent, you play a key role in determining the program that best matches the academic and cultural needs of your child. We look forward to working with you to make those decisions and appreciate your participation in your child's education. Feel free to ask parent coordinators and staff members at your child's school about ELL programs, or use the contact information in this brochure. We wish you and your child a happy and productive year.

Sincerely,
The Office of ELLs

Frequently Asked Questions About English Language Learners (ELLs)

How does a school determine if my child is an English Language Learner?

All parents or guardians of newly enrolled students are required to complete a Home Language Identification Survey (HLIS). This survey lets school staff know what language you use in your home. If the HLIS indicates that your child uses a language other than English, he or she is administered an English proficiency test called the Language Assessment Battery Revised (LAB-R). Performance on this test determines your child's entitlement to English language development support services. (If LAB-R results show that a child is an ELL and Spanish is used in the home, he or she must also take a Spanish LAB to determine language dominance.)

Who will notify me of my child's eligibility for English language development services?

Schools are responsible for identifying, notifying, and placing students in ELL instructional programs.

Once I am notified of my child's entitlement status, how can I get more information about ELL programs and services?

Schools are required to hold orientations for parents or guardians of newly enrolled ELLs to inform them of the different ELL programs that are available. In orientations, you have the opportunity to receive materials about ELL programs in your home language, and to ask questions about ELL services (with assistance from a translator). At the end of each orientation, school staff collect the Parent Survey and Program Selection Form, which indicates the program that you are requesting for your child.

What ELL programs are available for my child?

- **Transitional Bilingual Education (TBE)** programs include language arts and subject matter instruction in the students' native language and English as well as intensive instruction in English as a Second Language. As the student develops English proficiency using the strengthened knowledge and academic skills acquired in the native language, instruction in English increases and native language instruction decreases.
- **Dual Language** programs provide half of the instruction in English and half in the native language of the ELLs in the program (e.g., Spanish, Chinese, Haitian Creole). Students of the native language are taught alongside English speaking students so that all students become bicultural and fluent in both languages.
- **Freestanding English as a Second Language (ESL)** programs provide all language arts and subject matter instruction in English through the use of specific instructional strategies. Support in the native language may be available.

When can my child exit from ELL programs and transition to monolingual English classes?

When your child scores at a certain level of proficiency in English on the New York State English as a Second Language Achievement Test (NYSESLAT), he or she can enter a monolingual instructional program. (It is recommended that Dual Language students remain in the program for the length of their tenure.) If your child transitions to all-English monolingual classes after becoming proficient in English, he or she can receive bilingual or ESL support, as needed.